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IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 18 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to welcome the timely statement by the President of the Security Council to the press on 13 August 1998 on the "continuing escalation of the armed conflict in Afghanistan caused by the Taliban forces' offensive in northern Afghanistan", in which the President said in part:

> "The Security Council is deeply concerned at the reports of the capture by the Taliban of the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mazar-e-Sharif and the rough treatment of its personnel. It strongly warns the perpetrators of this flagrant violation of the recognized norms and principles of international law against causing any further harm to their captives and demands the immediate release of the personnel of the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mazar-e-Sharif, as well as of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) correspondent in that city."

In addition to the 11 personnel of the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mazar-e-Sharif and the IRNA correspondent, 36 Iranian relief workers carrying foodstuffs in trucks have also been detained by the Taliban forces on the day of the offensive campaign against that city on 8 August 1998. They have all been reportedly transferred to Kandahar. The names of all detainees are herewith attached as an annex to the present letter.

It may be pointed out that at the outset of the Taliban offensive campaign to the north of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran had sought assurances from the Government of Pakistan that the security of the Consulate-General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mazar-e-Sharif and the integrity and safety of its personnel would not be violated.

I wish to report, with extreme concern, that as of this morning the Taliban leaders have not been forthcoming and there has been no progress towards the resolution of this highly serious problem.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran regards further delay in the release of its nationals totally unacceptable. It is ultimately responsible for the safety and security of its nationals and is fully prepared to live up to its responsibility. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran nevertheless wishes to see its nationals released unharmed and expeditiously without any further delay through negotiation and in an amicable fashion.

Hence, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran calls upon the Secretary-General and the Security Council to continue to regard this issue as vitally important and to use the good offices of the United Nations to impress upon the Taliban, and the Governments in a position to assist, in ensuring the safety and immediate release of the Iranian captives.

It would be highly appreciated if the text of the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hadi NEJAD-HOSSEINIAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Personnel of the Consulate-General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Mazar-e-Sharif

1. Mr. Nasser Rigi
2. Mr. Majid Noori
3. Mr. Noorullah Norouzi
4. Mr. Heydar Ali Bagheri
5. Mr. Mohammad Nasser Nasser Jazdar
6. Mr. Hossein Akbari
7. Mr. Rashid Pariav Fallalh
8. Mr. Mohmmad Ali Ghiasi
9. Mr. Karim Heydarian
10. Mr. Allahdad Shahsavan Ghareh Hosseini
11. Mr. Mohmmad Hossein Jafarian

Correspondent of the Islamic Republic News Agency

Mr. Mahmoud Saremi

Iranian relief workers

1. Mr. Gholamhossein Hosseini
2. Mr. Gholamreza Anbarestani
3. Mr. Hossein Ekrami
4. Mr. Mohammad Dehnavi
5. Mr. Gholamreza Pursaadat
6. Mr. Mohammadhossein Fakumoghaddam
7. Mr. Mansour Sangaki
8. Mr. Gholamreza Barati
9. Mr. Hassan Rezai
10. Mr. Mohammad Mamish Ghalenour
11. Mr. Alireza Asadollahi
12. Mr. Abolghasem Yazdani Tavallai
13. Mr. Aliakbar Shahsavari Kheirabadi
14. Mr. Alireza Saedi
15. Mr. Esmail Afagha
16. Mr. Abolghasem Mazinani
17. Mr. Mehdi Hafaee
18. Mr. Ali Afshari Tabrizi
19. Mr. Majafali Molla Salehi
20. Mr. Ghadir Nezamivand Chegini
21. Mr. Kasra Tavakoli Kesheh
22. Mr. Abolfazl Abasali
23. Mr. Gholamhossein Yousofi Moghaddam
24. Mr. Reza Yousofi Moghaddam
25. Mr. Abas Zarea Fakhrabadi
26. Mr. Mohammadjavad Salari
27. Mr. Hadj Aliakbar Jahanbakhsh
28. Mr. Hamid (Son of Hossein)

29. Mr. Golamreza Armin
30. Mr. Jahangir Askari
31. Mr. Hassan Tarragh
32. Mr. Hamid Tahmasebi Lotfabadi
33. Mr. Saed Reza Mousavi Aghdas
34. Mr. Jahangir Alasavandi
35. Mr. Hossein Rezapour
36. Mr. Asadollah Meamar